

Whereas the National Academy of Sciences has been studying predator control in Alaska for five years, and the National Park Service has labeled these beavers as very evasive and wily "tree predators"; and

Whereas the federal government is, over objections, reintroducing gray wolves, grizzly bear, and lynx into several western states in order to enhance the biological diversity in those states; and

Whereas the National Park Service is closing Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve to fishing for crabs because the crabs are an essential element of the ecosystem of the park and the long established and sustainable crab fishery is inconsistent with the preservation of natural crab populations; and

Whereas the policy of the National Park Service in Alaska and several other states is to remove the people rather than the animals when there is a conflict between people and wildlife; and

Whereas federal law provides for extensive penalties for harassment of endangered species;

Be it Resolved That the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests that the National Park Service cease its efforts to remove the beaver from the Potomac Tidal Basin in Washington, D.C., and assist the reestablishment of a healthy beaver population in the nation's capital; and be it

Further Resolved That the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the Fish and Wildlife Services to exercise its federal authority and cite, with criminal violations, members and contractors of the National Park Service who harass the Potomac Tidal Basin beavers; and be it

Further Resolved That the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests the National Park Service to investigate the habitat requirements for beaver in Washington, D.C., and the adaptations that beaver have made to cope with the unique urban environment of Washington, D.C., establish protected beaver habitat areas in Washington, D.C., and use good science in its actions regarding beaver in Washington, D.C.

Copies of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Al Gore, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; to the Honorable Bruce Babbitt, Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior, to Robert G. Stanton, Director, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, to Jamie Rappaport Clark, Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of the Interior; to all members of the U.S. Congress; to the Honorable John Kitzhaber, Governor, State of Oregon; to Paul G. Risser, Ph.D., President, Oregon State University; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.

SENDING GROUND TROOPS TO KOSOVO WOULD COMPOUND A HUGE FOREIGN POLICY ERROR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, several times over the last few days I have heard reports on national networks saying that Members of Congress were getting "antsy" about not committing ground troops to Kosovo. The implication is that all of the Members of Congress want ground troops in there immediately.

I believe it was a terrible mistake to start bombing in the first place, and it certainly would be compounding a huge error to place many thousands of ground troops in there now.

As many columnists have pointed out, the NATO bombings have made this situation much worse than it ever would have been if we had simply stayed out. The very liberal Washington Post columnist, Richard Cohen, wrote, "I believe, though, that the NATO bombings have escalated and accelerated the process. For some Kosovars, NATO has made things worse."

Pat M. Holt, a foreign affairs expert writing in the Christian Science Monitor, wrote, "The first few days of bombing have led to more atrocities and to more refugees. It will be increasing the instability which the bombing was supposed to prevent."

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Philip Gourevitch, writing in the April 12 New Yorker Magazine, said: "Yet so far the air war against Yugoslavia has accomplished exactly what the American-led alliance flew into combat to prevent: Our bombs unified the Serbs in Yugoslavia, as never before, behind the defiance of Milosevic; they spurred to a frenzy the 'cleansing' of Kosovo's ethnic Albanians by Milosevic's forces; they increased the likelihood of the conflict's spilling over into Yugoslavia's south-Balkan neighbors; and they hardened the hearts of much of the non-Western world against us—not least in Russia, where passionate anti-Americanism is increasing the prospects for the right-wing nationalists or the Communist Party to win control of the Kremlin and its nuclear arsenal in coming elections."

Many conservative analysts have been very critical. Thomas Sowell wrote: "Already our military actions are being justified by the argument that we are in there now and cannot pull out without a devastating loss of credibility and influence in NATO and around the world. In other words, we cannot get out because we have gotten in. That kind of argument will be heard more and more if we get in deeper."

"Is the Vietnam War so long ago that no one remembers? We eventually pulled out of Vietnam," Mr. Sowell wrote, "under humiliating conditions with a tarnished reputation around the world and with internal divisiveness and bitterness that took years to heal. Bad as this was, we could have pulled out earlier with no worse consequences and with thousands more Americans coming back alive."

Mr. Sowell asks, "Why are we in the Balkans in the first place? There seems to be no clear-cut answer."

William Hyland, a former editor of Foreign Affairs Magazine, writing in the Washington Post said, "The President has put the country in a virtually impossible position. We cannot escalate without grave risks. If the President and NATO truly want to halt eth-

nic cleansing, then the alliance will have to put in a large ground force or, at a minimum, mount a credible threat to do so. A conventional war in the mountains of Albania and Kosovo will quickly degenerate into a quagmire. On the other hand, the United States and NATO cannot retreat without suffering a national and international humiliation. * * * The only alternative is to revive international diplomacy."

Mr. Hyland is correct, but unfortunately I am afraid that ground troops in Kosovo would be much worse than a quagmire. Former Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleberger was quoted on a national network last week as saying that the Bush administration had closely analyzed the situation in the Balkans in the early 1990s and had decided it was a "swamp" into which we should not go.

NATO was established as a purely defensive organization, not an aggressor force. With the decreased threat from the former Soviet Union, was NATO simply searching for a mission? Were some national officials simply trying to prove that they are world statesmen or trying to leave a legacy?

The U.S. has done 68 percent of the bombing thus far. This whole episode, counting reconstruction and resettlement costs after we bring Milosevic down, will cost us many billions.

If there have to be ground troops, let the Europeans take the lead. Do not commit U.S. ground troops. Let the Europeans do something. The U.S. has done too much already. Humanitarian aid, yes; bombs and ground troops, no.

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS PARTICIPATE IN REENACTMENT OF SELMA-TO-MONTGOMERY CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. NORTHUP). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, with me on the House floor I have a number of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, Republican and Democrat, who experienced a marvelous journey to Selma, Alabama, a few weeks ago to commemorate the 34th anniversary of the great march led by Dr. King and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) to end racism and bigotry across this country.

We had nearly 20 Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle that traveled to Selma and Birmingham and Montgomery. What I would like to do is ask all of my colleagues who are here to take various stations and we could have a conversation on the floor without the formal proceeding of yielding to other Members.

Madam Speaker, I guess I should first recognize my good friend and brother, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), elected the same year as I, who helped lead us on that march, as we did

last year as well, giving so many of us the experience of walking in the shoes of those that had gone before. It was an experience that I have to say I will never forget.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) my friend, my brother, and my colleague, for being the co-leader of this delegation traveling from Washington to Birmingham where we had an opportunity to visit the Civil Rights Museum, the Sixteenth Street Church that was bombed on September 15th, 1963, where the four little girls were killed, and to visit the park where they used the dogs and the fire hoses against little children.

We then traveled, as the gentleman suggested, on to Montgomery and then to Selma. During that entire trip in the State of Alabama, we were in the district of the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. HILLIARD) and we should take the moment to thank him for his hospitality and thank all of our colleagues.

This trip was sponsored by Faith and Politics, a group that comes together here in Washington where we have been meeting for some time discussing the whole question of race, having a dialogue on race. We have been doing it here, in our districts, in our offices, in our homes. We did it on this trip and we are going to continue to do it.

So I want to thank my colleague, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) for bringing us together tonight. Maybe the gentleman from Alabama would have something to say, since we were in his district in Alabama.

Mr. HILLIARD. Madam Speaker, let me first of all thank all of my colleagues for coming to Alabama. I am very happy that we got a chance to participate in the reenactment of the Selma-to-Montgomery march. I hope, and I am certain that it did bring feelings different from what they would have felt elsewhere unless they had been with JOHN LEWIS and others on the actual march.

We still march for equality in this country, and the participation of my colleagues in that march brought forth the idea that there are still things that are imperfect about this country. But the fact that all of my colleagues came and all participated let me know, and hopefully let America know, that all of my colleagues are on the job, that they are trying to make this country a better place, and realize that we still have got a distance to go.

So we were very happy to have our fellow Members of Congress in the State of Alabama, have them participate in the reenactment of something that meant so much to this country and something that had our colleagues of 3 decades ago to look at themselves and reexamine the state of discrimination in this country and make changes. Because we were there, I hope we will reexamine how things are, and any changes that are necessary, we will make them.

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, it was obviously a real treat for me to participate. I think of all of the activities, actually being in Selma and being with JOHN LEWIS and the reenactment of the crossing of the Edmund Pettis Bridge is something that I will never forget. I think that was for me the highlight of the trip.

Then also I think recognizing that we serve in the House with so many different personalities and different people. And even though I have known JOHN LEWIS for a period of time, I guess I did not really recognize the kind of hero that he is to so many people in the movement in really striving for better race relations and improving civil rights. To have the opportunity to be with him that weekend and to have him really walk us through what happened during that period I think sensitizes all of us to the importance of those events in terms of really standing on the shoulders of people who were there and sensitizing us to the importance of better race relations and what happened there in terms of the movement.

Then having the opportunity to hear from Mrs. Martin Luther King, who joined us on that Sunday morning, and hearing from her was just an extraordinary experience.

Madam Speaker, I have taken the occasion to actually go back to my own district earlier this week. As a matter of fact, a few days ago I met with the African-American leaders in my own community, the head of the NAACP, the head of a couple of other African-American organizations. I talked to them about our experience and talked to them about what we can do as leaders in our community in Peoria to improve race relations.

So I am really trying to build on the experience that we had, that the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) provided to us, and that all of the folks at Faith and Politics provided.

I think I want to conclude by saying a special thanks to Doug Tanner for really helping to organize these activities. Doug is here in the Chamber with us tonight and has done just an extraordinary job of helping to organize all of us around people like the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) and others to make this happen.

Madam Speaker, it is something I will never forget. I hope to build on it in my own community, and I hope we can build it as Members here in the House. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his leadership and for the ability of all of us to join him and share the experience that he shared with us. And a special thanks to Doug Tanner for all that he does to sort of enlighten all of us and give us an experience that I know many of us will never forget.

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, this was a great trip in that all of us here, 20 or so that went down on both sides

of the aisle, I thought became much stronger friends as we renewed our commitment to end racism and bigotry and discrimination. And as much as we thought we knew each other on the trip, we always learn something new.

I have been in a little prayer group with the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER), and it was only until we got on the bus and my wife and I were sitting in front of BOB and his wife and we sort of talked about our experiences that I thought when I was in the mid-'60s when this event really happened, I did not know about it. I was in fourth grade. I did not see that on the news. I did not watch the news when I was in the fourth grade.

It came out in the description, as I was listening to the gentleman from California, and he was talking about a variety of different events and seeing different things unfold, that I learned that he had been a student in college and had seen some of the events and actually took it upon himself to come down and become, in essence, one of the Freedom Riders on one of those buses.

I know that it was a marvelous experience for him. He actually spent some time in prison because of it. And this was his first trip back to Alabama since then. I would love to hear a little bit of the gentleman's thoughts firsthand tonight.

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan, and I thank all of us for being able to put this together. I wish those who were viewing this from their offices and from around the country could see that we are a bipartisan group standing on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. UPTON. We like having the gentleman from California on this side of the aisle. We will keep working on it.

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, seeing the world from the right is a very different perspective. But it is clear that we all see this as not only a bonding experience for all of us, but to come together around the issues of fighting discrimination and ending racism is something that bonds us all together. There is no aisle when it comes to these issues.

And like all of the other Members who were on this incredible weekend pilgrimage, we thank especially JOHN LEWIS for leading us in a religious experience. We were with, I think we all know, an authentic American hero, someone who really changed American history, changed the course of history through his own personal witness, his willingness to stand up for righteousness and for the truth and against racism; who was beaten down, was imprisoned, and yet got up and is here in Congress to lead us into a new understanding.

Madam Speaker, we thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), all of us, for reliving those experiences.

The changes that I saw, and I had not been in Alabama for 30 years, were incredible political changes, social

changes. It reminded us of the progress that we made, but it also reminded us I think of the ways we have got to go.

We were in Selma, and a small town takes a long time to change. We saw how changes had to be made there. But what struck me as someone who had been there 30 years ago was the incredible courage that was evidenced, the tremendous courage evidenced by the young people and the older people at that time. I got to go back to college after a summer in jail. People had to stay there and take the hardship and the challenge and the threats of death.

Mr. SPRATT. Madam Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FILNER. I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. SPRATT. Madam Speaker, I did not interrupt the gentleman except for the single purpose of pointing out what he was about to point out himself. The gentleman very correctly recognized JOHN LEWIS as a great American hero. However, the gentleman from California was humble in not pointing out the fact, explicitly I think, that he himself was pretty heroic, a Freedom Rider, 3 months, 6 months in prison in Mississippi. For those of us who grew up in the South, that is a stirring testimonial.

We are proud and I could see when we were down there that he was, I hope, pleased to see that some of the things that he fought for have come to fruition. A long way to go still, but the world is a much greater place because of the sacrifices that he and JOHN LEWIS made.

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) for his remarks.

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Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, one of the individuals that we had wished had been with us for the full time but was with us for certainly a good part of it was the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. DICKEY). All of us here participated in many discussions and conferences, not only with the White House but with other folks, not only in this town but across the country. The gentleman from Arkansas has been a special help on this, and his heart is big, and we appreciate that.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. DICKEY).

Mr. DICKEY. Madam Speaker, the thing that I wanted to point out has a lot to do with the age of the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) at the time and my age at the time. He was in the fourth grade. I was 17 years of age when in Arkansas we had the tragedy of Little Rock Central, or the Little Rock High School crisis.

I know that I was going to college during that time and had to pass back and forward through Little Rock exactly during that time. I had a profound lesson that I learned on this trip because of my insensitivity back then. I just started playing it through. I watched as everything happened there

and how many brave and heroic young people were leading the attack against bigotry and against hatred, and I thought about my own self.

I was not but about three, two years younger than the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), and there he was. He cared enough to sacrifice. I thought about this as we were going from church to church and where they had their meetings in preparation for the walks, how they never did know, they did not know enough about the society or about the opposition to know whether they were going to survive or not.

They were not interested whether or not they would be successful. They were only interested in proposing and pushing the issue of fairness and civil rights. I thought that was a significant, a significant message that I learned.

I also sat across the street on the bus and looked at the spot that Rosa Parks got on the bus, the very point. We were told that she was not a part of any organized effort. She had just reached the point where she had said enough is enough; I am not going to put up with it anymore. Look what happened. She was not a young person at the time, but she was brave. She was brave because she did not count what the consequences might be.

I mean death was at near hand for all of these people, and that is just hard to understand. I mean here in the United States, it was like battle lines were drawn, and people stepped out and they were beaten like the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) was beaten as he finished crossing the bridge.

I think what it all amounts to and what I learned from it is that these people sacrificed so much so that a person like myself, who was possibly caloused by being from a privileged family, could feel better about ourselves.

I want to thank you for what you did, all of you who sacrificed then, and particularly I want to thank my colleagues for including me in this trip because it did me a lot more good than I ever imagined.

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, one of our great Members that accompanied us was the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON). I would be happy to hear some of her comments.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Madam Speaker, for me it was an opportunity to reconnect and to be revived. I think sometimes we live through an experience and do not know all the details, but we think we know them.

For me to go back and actually see the places for the first time, as a person who was active in civil rights, not in Alabama but my own little local area, to understand how profound those individuals had to be, how courageous they had to be, and how significant their involvement meant in terms of progress, and how the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. DICKEY) said that Rosa Parks was an average person who did an extraordinary thing, and how that extraordinary thing on the part of ordi-

nary people meant just a difference in the Americans' response.

I think the other thing that was good for me, and I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) as well, is bringing those of us who are more experienced in the civil rights group together and those who never have been involved.

Those of us who think of ourselves as experienced sometimes get a little caloused. We kind of forget the significance of the battles that the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) did or others did or Rosa Parks did. We kind of need to be revived. So for me it was a revival and a motivation.

The thought I had going back home at the 'hood was not so much I need to do it with my white citizens as well, but I needed to do it for my children who are now adults. I needed to do it with my friends, in fact for them to really have an appreciation of what a profound history there is.

My colleagues are right. It was indeed a spiritual awakening. It is a sense that all those kids who were attacked, you know, there is a prophetic history of the divine intervention. There is a whole theory called God of history; and that there is intervention of how the divine uses ordinary people to move people in authority in such a way that could not be moved by people in authority. So in some ways, we need to understand what that means, that ordinary people can make a difference.

I thank my colleagues for including me, and I hope that, if I do not go back the next time, that many of our colleagues will have the experience. But we ought to just share with people the opportunity of having this kind of revival and motivation and appreciation for a sense of history.

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) was an active member with our group going down, and again, for me, was one of the first times I actually had a chance to have lengthy and decent conversations with a naval representative from Arkansas. It was terrific to have him on board, too.

Mr. BERRY. Madam Speaker, all of us that participated in the trip came away with a new appreciation for what happened in Selma, Montgomery, and Birmingham. We are very appreciative of the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) and certainly the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) for making it possible for us to experience that.

When I first came to the House, one of the first people that extended the hand of friendship to me was the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS). He shook my hand and he said, "Welcome, my friend and my brother." I knew just from the way he shook your hand and the way he said it that he meant it.

Until I went to Selma and walked across the Edmund Pettus Bridge arm-in-arm with the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), I did not really appreciate what he meant or how important it was that he did that.

I suspect, had I been through some of the things that the gentleman Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and some of the others that were in the nonviolent civil rights movement at that time, I would not even want to be in the same room with a guy like me. I can understand that.

But I think it says so much that we can come together, that we did make this pilgrimage, and it meant an awful lot to all of us. It shows us, not only how far we have come, but how far we have yet to go, and that we must never, ever forget that we cannot go back to what that was.

I just once again want to thank all of my colleagues for their leadership: Doug Tanner, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON), and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS).

What a great privilege it was to be with the other leaders of the movement, Bernard Lafayette, many, many others that were there. To hear their experiences firsthand, it gave it all just so much more meaning. I think the term "keep your eye on the prize" certainly will always be much more meaningful to me now, and it points out to us how petty and unimportant some of these things we argue about on this floor are, and that there are things that are more important and that that is what we should be about.

But it was a tremendous experience for me. I think that anyone that has not done it has really missed something.

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) who joined us and helped us in every way.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, I want to add my voice to thank Doug Tanner and the Faith and Politics Institute for putting this trip together.

I have been, since I have been here, a strong believer in the importance of Members on both sides of the aisle. I would say to the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER), it is strange over here on the left side of the aisle too for me, as it is for him on the right, but I think when Members of both parties go out and see each other out of this room, good things happen.

So I found it to be an enriching week-end from many standpoints. But just to have the opportunity to talk to Members who are not of my party and to get to know them as people, I think helps us do our work here. I think that is important.

What actually piqued my interest on this trip, I heard the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) at the Hershey retreat a couple years ago during the nondenominational church services describe his experience. It is his story, and I am not going to take it from him. But basically there are three Members of his party that were all involved in this movement at the same time in the 1960s, and they had some differences in points of view.

The fact that they not only came together years later to serve in the United States Congress but in the same

political party, I think to me that story, I have carried that story with me since he told it, for 3 years, to show that there are no differences that cannot be bridged when one begins to work towards it.

Like the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON), I knew the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS). I would sit as the Speaker pro tempore, and would I see the gentleman from Georgia come to the well and talk every once in a while. A lot of times he was talking about things that I did not agree with, but I did not know his rich history.

To have the chance to walk in the footsteps with a true American hero like JOHN LEWIS was an amazing experience for me, just a kid growing up in Ohio. I will not forget that.

We have all been gone over our Easter break in our districts. I took what I learned that weekend, and I visited a lot of schools because I like to spend time with my young people in my district.

I was able to tell them the story about what some people had to go through to get the right to vote and the fact that JOHN LEWIS and people like JOHN LEWIS were willing to risk their lives, were willing to risk police dogs and fire hoses and everything else that could be thrown at them in the 1960s just to get the right that we all take for granted to go in and cast a ballot in a Presidential race or a congressional race or a city council race.

So I was talking with some high school seniors, and I asked them, because we can register to vote at 18, how many are registered that are 18; and only half of them were. It has given me a powerful incentive and a powerful message to go back and talk to them now about what people before them had to go through to get the right to vote and that they should not squander that opportunity.

I was reminded of how far we have to go, but I was mostly reminded of the fact that we need to do it all together, Republicans and Democrats, black and white, men and women, rich and poor. A lot of times discussion in this Chamber is about dividing rather than bringing together. We need to concentrate more on finding the things that unite us. When we do that, I think that we can move forward.

If the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) will permit me, I have one quick story that I was reminded of when we were in Alabama, about one of our Presidents, Harry Truman. We all go door-to-door in our campaigns. As the story goes, he ran into a nasty homeowner one day and stuck out his hand and said, "I am Harry Truman, and I would like your vote." The woman would not come from behind the door. She said, "Mr. Truman, I know exactly who you are, and I would not vote for you if you were Saint Peter himself." Mr. Truman, for a Democrat, he had pretty quick wit. He said, "Madam, with all due respect, if I were Saint Peter, I do not think you would be in my district."

It occurred to me when we were down in Alabama that this is one district, the United States is one district, and we need to figure out what it is that is going to pull us together more than anything else.

So I was very thankful to spend those three days with all of my colleagues, and I was most appreciative to have the chance to spend that time with the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS).

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT) who was a great fellow to join us with his wife as well on the trip as we crossed the State.

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Mr. WATT of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I was seated here listening to the stories and thinking about what this trip meant to me. Let me start by just thanking the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), our leader, our primary leader, and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON), our co-leader on this trip. It was a wonderful, wonderful experience.

My colleagues will probably recall that at the end of the trip when we were at the airport about to board the plane from Alabama, we had a little debriefing, a discussion, and everybody was going around talking about what this trip had meant. And I sat quietly and never said anything because I was still sorting through the emotions I was feeling and the significance of this trip.

And it took me several weeks really to kind of put in perspective some feelings. And this is kind of where I got to at the end of that vexing period.

I was reminded that in 1963, I got a scholarship offer to Talladega University in Alabama. And I came to that fork in the road. I had never been to Alabama. And when I looked at the scholarship offer that I had gotten, I decided that probably the last place in the world I wanted to go was Alabama in 1963.

And I have been true to that up to this trip. I never set foot in Alabama. It was not a place that I ever aspired to go to to visit. I had these images of people being beaten and fire-hosed and dogs sicced on folks. All these years since 1963, those images have lingered in my mind, and I never have wanted to go to Alabama. And I finally got talked into it by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and the wonderful people from Faith and Politics, my good friend over here.

Now, another part of me kept saying, well, why did I not want to go to Alabama? I mean, North Carolina, which is where I am from, is in the south also. And I think I came to grips with some fears that I had about going to Mississippi and Alabama and Arkansas, the far southern States, where this movement was taking place. I think I decided that part of the reason that I never wanted to go there was that I was afraid to go there.

I knew that there were battles to be fought in North Carolina, but I felt like

the people in North Carolina were more progressive than the people in Alabama and Mississippi. And so I came away from this trip really with an increased amount of admiration for the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS).

I wrote him a letter. It took me 3 or 4 weeks to write the letter to him because I wanted to say exactly what I wanted that note to him to say. And what I wanted to say to him was that there were those of us in all areas of the south who were kind of around the margins of the civil rights movement, doing little bits and pieces of things here and there, and then there were those like the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and Fred Shuttlesworth who were right in the middle of this heated battle and making what very easily could have been the ultimate sacrifice, and was in fact for the young girls in Alabama and for other people who participated in those movements.

I already loved and respected the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS). I had read his book. I had heard about him. I had seen him on television. But to be there in Alabama and to walk and ride through that State where I now believe I was fearful of going allowed me to come away with an even greater appreciation for those who are on the firing line and making that ultimate sacrifice.

And so, I want to say publicly and with all sincerity that I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS). And I thank all of those thousands of people, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and all of those people who were not fearful, or even if they were, they overcame those fears and they went and they made that sacrifice, because it has made America what it is today and it has certainly made it possible for us all to stand here and share these experiences, black and white, Republican and Democrat, and to say to America that when it comes to a unity of purpose and all of us being Americans, there is no argument about that anymore. And in those days, there was an argument about it.

We put that argument to rest, and we owe a great debt to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) for doing that.

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT).

Mr. SPRATT. Madam Speaker, I shudder to follow that eloquence.

The gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT) and I grew up 30 miles apart. He is from Charlotte, North Carolina. I am from York, South Carolina. Not Alabama, not Mississippi, but still the segregated south.

I was 12 years old in 1954, about 18, 19, 20 years old when the civil rights movement started. And while York County was not the same as Neshoba, Mississippi, when the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) made his first stop in Rock Hill, South Carolina, 13 miles from where I live on the Freedom Rider bus, he was met by thugs in the bus station who took him on, took him

down, and he received the first of I guess many batterings on the head, bloodied up badly.

But here is the profound point about it and the reason this pilgrimage we made is so important to understanding ourselves as a people and understanding what this movement is about. A police officer, as I recall the story, had been standing on the sidelines watching the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) take the beating, and at some point he sort of interceded and asked him, do you want to prefer charges, which he could have done. And he said, no, I do not have anything against him individually. I am against the system, the oppression, the way it affects white people and black people, causes them to do things like this. I did not come down here to get this man in trouble. I came to lift us all out of this oppression.

In that same city of Rock Hill, about the third or fourth series of sit-in strikes developed at the local McCrory's from a small, black Baptist college called Friendship College. It started more or less spontaneously, but they were following what was happening at North Carolina A&T and what was happening at Nashville. And they did the same thing in Rock Hill except they did something different.

When they were taken to the county prison, which, believe me, the prison campus is not a place where anybody of any color would want to be, when they were taken there, they did not post bond; they took their toothbrushes with them and they stayed for the duration, 30 days.

The significance of what they did was not appreciated by those of us who were outside onlookers. It was not appreciated by me until I read Taylor Branch's book. Because SNCC at that point was just about broke, they did not have money to send bail money up to get these young college students out of jail, and they developed a motto that would exonerate SNCC from having to come up with that money: "Jail. No bail."

Now, my colleagues would think that that was just a bunch of hard-headed college kids out to make a point. But the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), when I asked him about the significance of it, told me, no, that helped us show the world that we were not just a bunch of college kids out fighting for our rights, but it was something more profound here.

There is a profoundness of doctrine about civil disobedience, a profoundness of doctrine about nonviolence that we all need to learn in this country today. And that is why this pilgrimage was more than just some symbolic journey. We all need to learn this.

Every school child in America grows up and knows what Lexington Green is. He or she should also know what Kelly Ingram Park in Birmingham is. Every school child in this country grows up and knows what Concord Bridge is in Massachusetts and what happened

there. He or she should know what happened at the Edmund Pettis Bridge, too. It is a part of our history.

And the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT) put it far better than I. For 200 years just about, this country professed to be the greatest constitutional democracy in the world. We lived under a Declaration of Independence which guaranteed all men the pursuit of happiness, equality. But it was not true. The Supreme Court of this country said black people were not even people. The Constitution did not even count them.

That was the kind of lie that this country lived. And these people, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and so many others in these places, made America rise up and live out the true meaning of her creed. It was an enormous accomplishment. It was a second American Revolution. No question about it.

Back when the Friendship Nine went to the county prison and stayed there, told SNCC they did not want bail, one of the early organizers of the movement in Nashville, Diane Nash, was in Atlanta; and she was so moved by what they did that she drove her car to Rock Hill and got picked up at McCrory's and taken to the county jail, and she stayed there with them just to give them the spirit to persevere.

She said something about the movement once when someone had made a paean to Dr. King, who was truly an American hero, no doubt about it. She said, do not make him superhuman. Do not enlarge him beyond the point that he is bigger than life itself. Because if you do, she said, you will misunderstand the meaning of the movement.

There were all kinds of people involved in the movement. Rosa Parks stands for the kind of participation that made the movement work, young members like the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), coming out of a small rural community in Alabama and just following their gut instincts. We made the movement. These people made the movement.

And if we understand that, and that is part of what we understand when we go to Selma and Birmingham and Montgomery, if we understand that, we realize that we do not need some big Messianic figure to come lead us down the path to the future; it is our responsibility, all of our responsibilities.

And the abiding message in this experience is, we can change this country for the better and it is a responsibility of each of us to do it.

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. FORBES), a very special member of the delegation who has always spoken against discrimination and bigotry.

Mr. FORBES. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding. And I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) particularly for leading this delegation. It is an important time for all of us, I think, in this country.

An old adage says that "if you do not remember history, you are bound to repeat it." This is a little bit more than just remembering history, though. This is really asking us to dig deep within our soul, as so many who led the civil rights movement, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and some of the others that have been mentioned, Bernard Lafayette, Fred Shuttlesworth, Dr. King, literally hundreds of people who broke with conventional wisdom and said that we should reach deeper into America's soul and make this a better Nation.

□ 2115

For me it was really, going into my fifth year in the Congress, one of the most profound and emotional and important undertakings that I have done since I have been privileged to represent the First District of New York.

During the 1960s, during the height of the civil rights endeavors, I was in my early teens, 11, 12, 13 years of age, and like my friend from North Carolina, I saw what was going on in Alabama and as a youngster I thought, "That's not a place that I would ever want to be." But still it was very remote to me, not unlike unfortunately the images we were seeing in Vietnam. It was horrible. We were outraged. Our hearts were broken. But it was happening somewhere far, far away, and particularly for young people at that time, many who were challenged to move into leadership roles as they grew older themselves. There was a remoteness to that endeavor that I am embarrassed to admit. But I was privileged to be part of this delegation on the 34th anniversary of what happened at the Edmund Pettis Bridge that really was almost the apex of the civil rights struggle. It allowed me as just one Member of Congress to dig deep within my own being and to ask, "Are we doing enough today to continue to correct the wrongs?" We are in this wonderful body and we are all sent here ostensibly to meet the challenges, to make America a better place, to correct the wrongs that we see around us.

I am moved tonight by the bipartisan spirit that engulfed us when we went to Selma, Alabama and Birmingham, Alabama just a couple of weeks ago. It reminds me that as a Member of Congress, I take those lessons and those reminders back with me in a very real way. I am hopeful that as we move forward, that this one Member of Congress, being further sensitized to the need to understand that yes, we have come a long way since even the 1960s but we have not come far enough.

As my friend from Ohio reminded me and all of us, that the key here is that we do it all together, that we figure out a way to meet the remaining challenges in this most wonderful Nation on the face of the earth, where people like JOHN LEWIS and other leaders could challenge the conventional wisdom and say, we can be a better place. And it is not about condemning what we are, it is challenging us to be better as we move forward as a Nation. And so

I first of all again want to thank the Faith and Politics Institute, Reverend Tanner, FRED UPTON, my good friend JOHN LEWIS and all of the Members who were part of that delegation, because you really made it a very real and moving experience for me and allowed me to take some valuable lessons from that experience. I will not only return for the 35th anniversary but also hopefully in my daily work as long as I have this privilege to try to be a better Member of Congress and work to meet the other challenges that we face.

In closing, I would like to also thank the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. HILLIARD) for his hospitality, the great way in which he received us and opened up his heart so that we could learn a little bit more about the wonderful Alabama that has come. I thank him for his leadership on this as well.

Mr. HILLIARD. One of the things that I think I learned from this experience was the lessons that we get from being with one another, not in this Chamber but away. I got to know some of you who I had barely spoken to in the four terms that I have been in this body. That gave me an opportunity to learn and to know of you as individuals. That was so gratifying to me, because I know you as persons. I do not see you as just another Congressperson or just as a number, not as a Republican or as a Democrat but as a friend. I really appreciate having that long weekend, spending that long weekend with you and getting to know you as individuals.

I would like to take the opportunity to invite you back for another long weekend for the millennium march. It will be bigger, it will be better, we will have more participants, and hopefully we will have many people who, like you, will see life as it is unfolding in the United States, a better place for all of us because of what JOHN LEWIS and so many others like him did in the past. Thank you for coming and you are welcome back to come in March of the year 2000.

Mr. UPTON. Just prior to the gentleman from Alabama giving his statement there just now, a number of us asked our friend Doug Tanner and some others, I know that based on our pilgrimage, there will be a lot of us that would like to cosponsor legislation to make that little park just across the river by the real start of the Edmund Pettis Bridge a national park, a national shrine.

We are looking for you to lead that effort as it is in your district, congressional courtesy. But if you wait too much longer, you are going to have some other people. We are offering that up, but I know a lot of us here, Republicans and Democrats, would like to cosponsor that effort and help you see that become a reality. As people gave their remarkable tales here on the floor tonight and what it meant to them, for some reason, about a little more than a year ago, JOHN LEWIS and maybe AMO HOUGHTON and a few others, JAY DICKEY, Doug Tanner, sort of had me on a list, and we got together

down in a little room in the Capitol, EF-100, and we talked about racism and what we could do. We can always pass the laws, but until something really happens at the grassroots, nothing is really going to happen. We talked about a number of different resolutions that we were offering up. I think the gentleman from Georgia then was in the middle of writing his book and how we could come together. A couple of weeks later, he asked me on the House floor if I might make the pilgrimage to Selma in 1998. When he gave me the weekend, March 6, the first weekend, I knew that I had major commitments back home in Michigan, that I could not do it, but somehow we juggled some things around and I flew down just for the day. I had never been to Alabama, ever. I flew down that Sunday morning, caught the first flight out at National Airport at 6 a.m. or whatever, terrible storm, got down just in time to hear JOHN's sermon in the church. His sermon reflected a little bit on who would have guessed, me, JOHN LEWIS, 33 years later, coming here to preach in the same church where Dr. King had preached and seeing some of the changes but knowing we had so far to go.

We walked across the bridge, we took a bus ride, we had a long discussion about racism and bigotry and what it meant in our own lives. We came back. The gentleman then came back to my district. We had a tough scene this last summer. We had the Klan come to my district for the first time that I can ever remember. They were not welcome. Yet they had the right to come. As you and I both met with a number of leaders in my hometown, we discussed how we ought to deal with it. You went back to really sort of the roots of what you wrote about in your book and your life, about nonviolence, how we ought to make it a nonevent, and we did. And in the end, they canceled their visit the day that they were supposed to come, though they came a few months later, and they found out that there was no welcome wagon out and people for the most part ignored them. The reaction was perfect.

As we thought about this trip this year, and AMO HOUGHTON was the co-chair last year, the Republican cochair along with Jim Nicholson, our Republican national chairman and the former governor of Colorado last year as well, I was privileged to be asked to cochair this group and really spend a night or two in Alabama, to have listened to the stories of so many Members last year when they talked about their meeting with Governor Wallace. I can remember SHERROD BROWN and you going to visit him literally in, I do not know if it was a hospital or his room, but he was not doing so well. Of course he has passed away today. And the white Members were not anxious to have their picture taken with him, thinking about all of the efforts that Governor

Wallace had done at the schoolhouse door and everyplace else. Yet you had forgiven him, peace in your heart. He knew that he had erred, he had asked for forgiveness and in fact he came around.

As we read your book, JOHN, and listen to your words, your wonderful words about leading the nonviolent effort, to see the courageous struggle that you went through and to visit the sites, whether they be in Montgomery or Birmingham, to see where Rosa Parks was taken off that bus, to look in the church where Dr. King first spoke or first became a minister, to see the shrine in the basement of the four wonderful, beautiful little girls who were killed with a bomb on a Sunday, to go through that wonderful museum in Birmingham, to see really, to touch the jail cell, to see the bombed-out bus that you and others had ridden at some point, to walk through that park, to see the dogs with their fangs out and to learn from Bernard Lafayette that in fact one of the German shepherds had a gold-plated tooth that the police riled up when he charged those kids.

We are so thankful for the work that you did to really help change America for the better. The reason that this pilgrimage was so important was for us to know where we are going, we have got to know where we have been. We know where we have been now, those of us that were not from there, and we know that we never ever want to go back. Yet there is work that we have to do. As Republicans and Democrats, as Members in this Chamber and the other and across the country, we have to make sure that there is no room in our hearts for hatred, for bigotry or racism. It is your footsteps and it is your leadership and it is your grace that allowed us to see the path that you took that helps give us the conviction and the courage and the perseverance to continue that path.

We are so appreciative of that love and of that work, JOHN.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Let me thank my friend and colleague and each of you for all of the kind words and everything that you have said tonight. But you must keep in mind, I was only one participant in a struggle. It was a community of participants, not a leader but just one individual in a community of individuals participating in a movement. I think our trip has brought us closer together.

I ran into Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr. last Sunday at church. She said to me, "JOHN, I was so moved, I was deeply moved, I can never tell you how moved, to see all those Members of Congress in Selma, Alabama during the first weekend in March."

I think that is why we have to go back. I am glad our colleague, Congressman EARL HILLIARD from Alabama, has extended an invitation for us to come back for the 35th anniversary of the march from Selma to Montgomery. We must go back. Because I think in this process, we help America

to become a circle of brothers and sisters, what I like to call, really in the movement what we call a band of brothers and sisters, a circle of trust. We build a sense of community. We move toward that period and that place of laying down the burden of race. I think as we move into the next century, we have to be the leaders, saying that as a Nation and as a people, we must lay down the burden of race. It is too heavy a burden for us to bear. I think what we have displayed tonight with the help of our good friend Doug Tanner and Faith and Politics, that it is something that we can share, not just with each other but back in our districts, in our States and for the whole Nation. If we can build just pockets of the beloved community, here on Capitol Hill, here in Washington, maybe we can build it around America, and maybe we can bring peace to the world community.

□ 2130

Madam Speaker, I think we got to keep it going, and this should not be the end, it should be just the beginning.

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, I just want to say I know there are a lot of Members who are sitting in their offices reading mail and probably signing mail and doing all kinds of work, and what I would say:

The invitation has been extended to Members for next year to go to Selma to celebrate the 35th anniversary, and if there are Members who care about race relations in America, and if there are Members who care about improving race relations in America, and if there are Members who care about really improving race relations in their own State, in their own district, I hope they will talk to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) or any of the rest of us about the opportunity to go to Selma next year and celebrate, commemorate, the 35th anniversary. It is a great opportunity, and it is a great learning experience.

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. DICKEY).

Mr. DICKEY. I do not want my colleagues to leave yet. But I want to say something. All this talk about the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), it has got some down sides to it, and let me just tell my colleagues what they are.

If we build him up so much, he might choose to come into my district again and campaign against me. So what I want to say, JOHN, is you are invited to come into Pine Bluff, Arkansas, on all of the even-numbered years, but I do not want you coming back again.

And another point: The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY), which makes two Arkansans that went on this trip; there was not any other State, is not another State that had two people. Or North Carolina it is? Excuse me. I will have to say that we matched North Carolina. But Marion

also campaigned against me in the last election. I do not know what it is that is about me, but I want to be serious about it in this sense: that what we do politically does not matter; what we do with the heart does. And the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and I are connected in the heart, and I want to thank him for that.

And I wanted to talk to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD).

Mr. LAHOOD. There are actually two Members from Ohio, too, just to make sure.

Mr. DICKEY. Is that right?

Mr. LATOURETTE. Actually there were three Members from Ohio. Sherrod Brown, Tom Sawyer and I can tell you what it is about you that gets these guys in your district.

Mr. DICKEY. Just because the gentleman is on that side of the aisle does not allow him to do that.

Mr. LAHOOD. It has something to do with being from Arkansas. I think that is what he was getting at.

Mr. UPTON. We had two Members from the great State of Michigan.

Mr. DICKEY. I just wanted you all to chime in. That is the only reason I brought it up.

I want to get into an exchange with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) about how, what he thought of Southerners during this time, and I will chime in as well.

Mr. LAHOOD. We only have 1 minute left, and I am afraid that it would not be enough time for me to explain what I think about Southerners.

Mr. DICKEY. I am talking about at that time. I think we got another hour.

Mr. UPTON. Does the gentleman from Georgia have the next hour? Is that right? I think we do, so we can go a few minutes, could we not?

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members, and we had many Members on the trip that were not here tonight, may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. NORTHUP). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I am by profession an educator and a historian, and from March 5th to March 7th, not only did I become a student of our nation's civil rights history, I saw history come alive during the pilgrimage to Birmingham, Montgomery and Selma. To be led by civil rights leader and my distinguished colleague, Representative JOHN LEWIS, was an honor in itself.

The events which took place in Alabama were pivotal in our nation's civil rights movement. "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing and the Bloody Sunday march were crucial experiences to America's collective psyche. It was Martin Luther King, Jr., and his devoted supporters who forced Americans to acknowledge the injustices committed against our fellow American citizens.

Race relations is extremely, if not more, relevant today. The painful lessons learned in

Montgomery, Birmingham and Selma continue to be experienced by minority populations all over the United States. The struggle for political recognition and participation continues not only in the African-American populations, but now in the fast-growing Hispanic American and Asian Pacific Islander American groups. It is only in the past few decades that we have seen the mobilization of Hispanic and Asian Pacific Islander communities, and who knows what racial-oriented movements will awaken at the dawn of the next millennium. My point is that these movements are crucial to our nation's maturity and diversity, they are integral to our constant drive to faithfully implement the democratic principles on which our Constitution is based.

I took my youngest son, Raphael, to Alabama, because I felt that it was crucial for young generations to learn the history of the civil rights struggle. The American people did not achieve the Voting Rights Act or establish the Civil Rights Division in the Department of Justice because these were the "right" things to do to help achieve equality in the United States. Our young adults must understand that it was through the toil, and sometimes blood, of courageous brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, students and teachers who accomplished these feats.

The people of Guam are going through our own civil rights struggle. We are American citizens, yet we are unable to vote for President. The opportunity to determine vote for our island's future political status has been stymied by numerous political and administrative obstacles.

The Pilgrimage to Alabama would not have been made possible without the leadership of Congressman JOHN LEWIS and Congressman FRED UPTON, without the efforts of Congressman EARL HILLIARD, and without the sponsorship of the Faith and Politics Institute. I take this opportunity to thank them for their diligent efforts in "keeping hope alive."

I encourage my colleagues to continue to learn from the lessons taught in Alabama.

Mr. UPTON. I just want to again thank the Faith in Politics Institute and the wonderful leadership of Doug Tanner and a terrific staff who really planned hours and many weeks to get this thing done the right way, and it was done the right way, and I know that Members will be anxious to go next year and to expand our circles and to do whatever we can to help end the scourge of racism and bigotry across this land.

SUPPORT THE PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, last Friday House Democrats across the country called on the Republican leadership to bring the Patients' Bill of Rights to the floor for a vote. Over a hundred Democrats nationwide held events in their districts to encourage their constituents to sign on to an electronic petition urging the Speaker

of the House, DENNIS HASTERT, and Senate Majority Leader TRENT LOTT to take immediate action on the Patients' Bill of Rights. In Washington I joined with a number of my Democratic colleagues from the House in a similar event before boarding a bus to Philadelphia, where we joined President Clinton at a rally in support of the Patients' Bill of Rights. In echoing the call of the House and Senate Democrats, President Clinton encouraged all Americans to log on to the Internet and sign the electronic petition to the Speaker and Senate majority leader. So far 13,600 people have signed this petition.

The reason, Madam Speaker, so many people have already signed the petition I think is clear. The managed care issue was left unfinished in the 105th Congress. On the House side the Patients' Bill of Rights was defeated by just five votes when it came to the floor, and it was considered on the floor as a substitute to the Republican leadership's managed care bill, which did pass and which in my opinion was a very bad piece of legislation. This Republican managed care reform or so-called managed care reform was a thinly-veiled attempt to protect the insurance industry from managed care reform, and not a single Democrat voted for it, and I think it was a show of solidarity on the Democrats' part that none of us voted for that what I consider very unfair bill which would not have done anything to reform managed care.

Last Friday's event illustrates that support amongst Democrats for passing the Patients' Bill of Rights is as strong as ever, and let me assure my colleagues that it needs to be. The Republican leadership in the House has reintroduced a bill that is virtually identical to what it moved last year, and on the Senate side the so-called HELP committee recently approved a sham managed care bill that does not allow patients to sue insurance companies, but does allow insurance companies, not doctors and patients, to define medical necessity.

Attempts to improve this bill were rebuffed by Republicans, who rejected 20 to 22 amendments offered by Democrats. Amendments rejected by Republicans included proposals to expand the access to emergency room care, expand access to specialists, establish minimum hospital stays for women undergoing mastectomies for breast cancer, and to provide access to clinical trials where appropriate for patients with life-threatening conditions.

I wanted to talk a little bit tonight about an editorial that followed up on the Democrats and what the Democrats and the President were emphasizing last Friday. The New York Times made observations in an editorial on Saturday that were very similar to what I said tonight and basically noted just how hollow the Republican approach to managed care reform is, and I would quote from the New York Times editorial on Saturday:

"Just about everyone on Capitol Hill professes interest in producing legislation that protects patients from unfair health practices, reads the editorial," and it goes on, "yet it is the Democratic proposal that more fully reflects the recommendations of a presidential advisory commission to improve health plan quality. The Senate Republican bill is too limited to accomplish this purpose."

Listing the myriad of problems with the Senate Republican bill, the New York Times editorial goes on to note, and I quote, that most of its provisions would apply only to 48 million individuals covered by plans in which large employers act as their insurers, leaving 110 million people in other plans unprotected. And the New York Times notes that the Republicans in the Senate have drawn a completely arbitrary line between people who get their insurance from their employer and people who do not, and for reasons that I cannot explain, Republicans think only people who get their insurance from their employer should be entitled to patient protections.

The protections that are afforded to individuals who qualify, moreover, under the Senate Republican bill constitute no protection at all, and again I refer to the New York Times editorial on Saturday which notes that, quote, "Appeals to an external reviewer will be allowed only when an insurer refused to pay for a procedure on the grounds that it was not medically necessary or is experimental. Because the Republican bill would allow insurance plans to define what treatment is medically necessary, this provision is absolutely meaningless for patients. In fact, it is worse than the current law, because if you set up an external appeals process that uses the plan's definition of medical necessity, that would even make it more difficult to hold health plans accountable for their actions. It basically adds another layer of bureaucracy that patients have to confront before they go to court."

Other shortcomings, and I am not going to go through all them, Madam Speaker, but other shortcomings noted by the New York Times editorial include the Republicans' failure to guarantee access to specialists and the failure to allow patients to sue health plans.

For all of these reasons, this New York Times editorial concludes that the Democrats' Patients' Bill of Rights, quote, "would be substantially stronger in allowing external review of coverage of disputes, in defining medical necessity, and in giving enrollees greater rights to take health plans to court." And the fact of the matter is, Madam Speaker, the Patients' Bill of Rights would be substantially stronger in every other aspect of managed care reform as well.

The point I am trying to make, and I think the point that we, as Democrats, were trying to make on Friday with our press conference and our rally with